General Assembly

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Agenda item 64

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Third Committee (A/60/503)]

60/138. Improvement of the situation of women in rural areas

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 56/129 of 19 December 2001 and 58/146 of 22 December 2003,

Recalling also the importance attached to the problems of rural women in the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women,[1] the Beijing Declaration[2] and Platform for Action[3] adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women and their ten-year review and appraisal, the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly[4] and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[5]

Recalling further the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[6] in which Member States resolved, inter alia, to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable, and the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[7] in which they also resolved to promote gender equality and eliminate pervasive gender discrimination by taking all necessary resolute action,

Welcoming the declaration adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-ninth session in the context of the review and appraisal of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly,[8]

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[1] *Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15–26 July 1985* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

[2] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[3] Ibid., annex II.

[4] Resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

[5] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

[6] See resolution 55/2.

[7] See resolution 60/1.

[8] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 7* and corrigendum (E/2005/27 and Corr.1), chap. I, sect. A; see also Economic and Social Council decision 2005/232.

Welcoming also the agreed conclusions on women's participation in and access to the media, and information and communication technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women, adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-seventh session,[9]

Welcoming further the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development,[10] as well as the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development[11] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),[12] in which Governments were called upon to mainstream the gender perspective into development at all levels and in all sectors,

Welcoming the ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2003 of the Economic and Social Council, adopted on 2 July 2003,[13] which stressed the need for rural development to become an integral part of national and international development policies and of the activities and programmes of the United Nations system, and called for an enhanced role for rural women at all levels of rural development, including decision-making,

Recognizing the critical role and contribution of rural women, including indigenous women, in enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security and eradicating rural poverty,

Noting that some effects of globalization may deepen the socio-economic marginalization of rural women,

Noting also that the globalization process has had some benefits by providing opportunities for wage employment for rural women in new sectors,

Mindful of the fact that the available data and existing tools of measurement and analysis are insufficient for a full understanding of the gender implications of the processes of globalization and rural change and their impact on rural women,

Recognizing the urgent need to take appropriate measures aimed at further improving the situation of women in rural areas,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[14]

2. *Invites* Member States, in collaboration with the organizations of the United Nations and civil society, as appropriate, to continue their efforts to implement the outcome of and to ensure an integrated and coordinated follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits, including their reviews, and to attach greater importance to the improvement of the situation of rural women, including indigenous women, in their national, regional and global development strategies by, inter alia:

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[9] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2003, Supplement No. 7* (E/2003/27), chap. I, sect. A; see also Economic and Social Council resolution 2003/44.

[10] *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18–22 March 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.II.A.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[11] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[12] Ibid., resolution 2, annex.

[13] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/58/3/Rev.1), chap. III, para. 35.

[14] A/60/165.

(*a*) Creating an enabling environment for improving the situation of rural women and ensuring attention to their needs and contributions, including through enhanced cooperation and a gender perspective, and their full participation in the development, implementation and monitoring of macroeconomic policies and programmes and poverty reduction strategies, including poverty reduction strategy papers, based on the Millennium Development Goals;

(*b*) Pursuing the political and socio-economic empowerment of rural women and supporting their full and equal participation in decision-making at all levels, including through affirmative action, where appropriate, and support for women's organizations, labour unions or other associations and civil society groups promoting rural women's rights;

(*c*) Integrating a gender perspective into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development policies and programmes, including budget policies, paying increased attention to the needs of rural women so as to ensure that they benefit from policies and programmes adopted in all spheres and that the disproportionate number of rural women living in poverty is reduced;

(*d*) Ensuring that the perspectives of rural women are taken into account and that they participate in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and activities related to emergencies, natural disasters, humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction;

(*e*) Investing in and strengthening efforts to meet the basic needs of rural women through improved availability, access to and use of critical rural infrastructure, such as energy and transport, capacity-building and human resources development measures and the provision of a safe and reliable water supply and sanitation, nutritional programmes, affordable housing programmes, education and literacy programmes and health and social support measures, including in the area of sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS treatment, care and support;

(*f*) Designing and implementing policies that promote and protect the enjoyment by rural women and girls of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and creating an environment that does not tolerate violations of their rights, including domestic violence, sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence;

(*g*) Developing specific assistance programmes and advisory services to promote economic skills of rural women in banking, modern trading and financial procedures and providing microcredit and other financial and business services to a greater number of women in rural areas, in particular female-headed households, for their economic empowerment;

(*h*) Considering adopting, where appropriate, national legislation to protect the knowledge, innovations and practices of women in indigenous and local communities relating to traditional medicines, biodiversity and indigenous technologies;

(*i*) Taking steps towards ensuring that women's unpaid work and contributions to on-farm and off-farm production, including income generated in the informal sector, are visible, and supporting remunerative non-agricultural employment of rural women, improving working conditions and increasing access to productive resources;

(*j*) Addressing the lack of timely, reliable and sex-disaggregated data, including by intensifying efforts to include women's unpaid work in official statistics, and developing a systematic and comparative research base on rural women that will inform policy and programme decisions;

(*k*) Designing and revising laws to ensure that, where private ownership of land and property exists, rural women are accorded full and equal rights to own land and other property, including through the right to inheritance, and undertaking administrative reforms and other necessary measures to give women the same right as men to credit, capital, appropriate technologies and access to markets and information;

(*l*) Promoting programmes to enable rural women and men to reconcile their work and family responsibilities and to encourage men to share equally with women household and childcare responsibilities;

(*m*) Mobilizing resources, including at the national level and through official development assistance, for increasing women's access to existing savings and credit schemes, as well as targeted programmes that provide women with capital, knowledge and tools that enhance their economic capacities;

(*n*) Supporting a gender-sensitive education system that considers rural women's specific needs in order to eliminate gender stereotypes and discriminatory tendencies affecting them;

3. *Invites* the Commission on the Status of Women to continue to pay due attention to the situation of rural women in the consideration of its priority themes;

4. *Invites* the relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, in particular those dealing with issues of development, to address and support the empowerment of rural women and their specific needs in their programmes and strategies, including in the context of globalization;

5. *Stresses* the need to identify the best practices for ensuring that rural women have access to and full participation in the area of information and communication technologies, and invites the World Summit on the Information Society, at its second phase in Tunis, to take into consideration, while addressing gender issues, the priorities and needs of rural women and girls as active users of information and ensure their participation in developing and implementing global information and communication technology strategies;

6. *Invites* Member States, the United Nations and the relevant organizations of its system to ensure that the needs of rural women are mainstreamed into the integrated process of follow-up to the major summits and conferences in the economic and social fields, in particular the Millennium Summit, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the International Conference on Financing for Development, the 2005 review of the progress achieved in implementing all the commitments made in the Beijing Platform for Action[3] and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[4] and the 2005 World Summit;

7. *Invites* Member States to take into consideration the concluding comments and recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women concerning their reports to the Committee when formulating policies and designing programmes focused on the improvement of the

situation of rural women, including those to be developed and implemented in cooperation with relevant international organizations;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session on the implementation of the present resolution, addressing different aspects of the empowerment of rural women.

64th plenary meeting
16 December 2005